

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A data structure configured as an interface definition of a message format of a particular eCommerce transaction type, comprising:

protocol information identifying a protocol and the particular eCommerce transaction type;

request data format information identifying a request message format for the particular eCommerce transaction type, wherein the request message format comprises a plurality of input fields; and

input field information identifying at least a portion of the plurality of input fields.

2. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the input field information identifies a physical location of each input field of at least the portion of the plurality of input fields.

3. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the protocol is selected from the group comprising cXML and mXML.

4. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the transaction type is a purchase order.

5. The data structure of claim 1, wherein a total number of fields of the plurality of input fields identified by the input field information is less than all of the plurality of input fields.

6. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the plurality of input fields includes input fields for at least two different request types and wherein the input field information represents only a first request type.

7. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the protocol information further identifies a sub-transaction type.
8. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the eCommerce transaction type is selected from a group comprising of a purchase order, a change purchase order, a remote catalog shopping request, an invoice request and a shopping basket content request.
9. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the input field information comprises a corresponding input field corresponding to each field of the portion of the plurality of input fields.
10. The data structure of claim 9, wherein a name of at least one field of the portion of the plurality of input fields is different than a name of the corresponding input field corresponding to the at least one field.
11. The data structure of claim 1, further comprising:
response data format information identifying a response message format for the particular eCommerce transaction type, wherein the response message format comprises a plurality of output fields; and
output field information identifying at least a portion of the plurality of output fields.
12. The data structure of claim 11, wherein a total number of fields of the plurality of output fields identified by the output field information is less than all of the plurality of output fields.
13. The data structure of claim 11, wherein the plurality of output fields includes output fields for at least two different request types and wherein the output field information represents only a first request type.
14. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the input field information and the

output field information is configured for mapping to an application access method, wherein the application access method is configured to describe an interface to an application.

15. The data structure of claim 14, wherein the application access method is selected from a program call access method, a java access method and a queue application access method.

16. A data structure configured as an interface definition of a request message format and a response message format of a particular eCommerce transaction type, comprising:

protocol information identifying a protocol and a transaction type;
request data format information identifying the request message format, wherein the request message format comprises a plurality of input fields; and
input field information identifying at least a portion of the plurality of input fields, wherein the plurality of input fields includes input fields for at least two different request types and wherein the input field information represents only a first request type;
response data format information identifying a response message format, wherein the response message format comprises a plurality of output fields; and
output field information identifying at least a portion of the plurality of output fields, wherein the plurality of output fields includes output fields for the at least two different request types and wherein the output field information represents only the first request type.

17. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the transaction type is a purchase order.

18. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the input field information identifies a physical location of each input field of at least the portion of the plurality of input fields in the request message format and the output field information identifies a physical location of each output field of at least the portion of the plurality of output

fields in the response message format.

19. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the input field information and the output field information is configured for mapping to an application access method, wherein the application access method is configured to describe an interface to an application configured to process the particular eCommerce transaction type.

20. The data structure of claim 1, wherein the input field information comprises a corresponding input field corresponding to each field of the portion of the plurality of input fields and wherein the output field information comprises a corresponding output field corresponding to each field of the portion of the plurality of output fields.